

FIRE INVESTIGATOR I

(Competitive Class)

GENERAL STATEMENT OF DUTIES

This class comprises specialized positions in the fire prevention bureau involving investigating cases of suspected arson. Employees of this class are responsible for performing or assisting law enforcement officers in performing initial investigations of cases of suspected arson, following-up leads, interviewing witnesses and suspects, and developing arson cases to be turned over to the district attorney for prosecution. Positions of this class are non-supervisory in nature, but the fire investigator is required to work closely with personnel of the fire suppression division at the fire scene and with law enforcement officials in all follow-up work. The fire investigator receives general instructions only, working independently in most areas. Work is supervised by and this class ranks directly below that of Fire Investigator II.

EXAMPLES OF WORK

Examples listed below are illustrative only. They are not intended to include all duties which may be assigned, neither are they intended to exclude other duties which may be logical assignments to this class.

Goes to the fire scene when arson is suspected; talks to the officer in charge and gets the names of possible witnesses and as much technical information about the fire as possible; examines the site for evidence before fire companies perform any overhaul, when possible; tries to determine the point of origin of the fire and to generally become familiar with the building and situation; if arson is definitely indicated, calls the sheriff's office to send deputies to help with investigation.

Photographs the fire scene taking overall views, origin of fire, views of physical damage or interesting debris, damage to adjoining buildings, position of bodies, etc.; tries to establish sequence of fire in pictures; takes photographs of onlookers in crowd and vehicles in the surrounding area; takes photographs at autopsy of burn victim (in cases where arson is suspected).

Surveys area of fire looking for possible evidence of arson using indicators such as depth of char, ventilation factors, fire load, evidence of back draft, smoke explosion, contents, unusual location of materials, windows open in cold weather, open valves on gas heaters in summer, etc.; determines the point of origin and then looks for cause of fire, trying to eliminate all possible natural causes.

Collects any available evidence such as tools used in entry, evidence of incendiary devices, containers of flammable liquids, etc.; correctly secures and labels evidence collected, protecting chain of custody; records all evidence collected and sends to the appropriate laboratory for examination and analysis; sketches the fire scene for use in investigation and for presentation in court.

Interviews any witnesses available; checks files and records, follows suspects, and collects any further evidence available, both physical evidence and information; tries to locate a suspect and build a case which can be turned over to the designated law enforcement or judicial officials for prosecution.

Issues subpoenas; makes arrests of suspects; restrains suspects; transports suspects or calls law enforcement officers to transport suspects to jail; fills out all necessary arrest reports.

Files criminal charges with district attorney; completes and turns over all records and reports of investigation to district attorney; testifies in court as an expert witness.

Coordinates work of the fire department and law enforcement agencies; works in cooperation with agencies such as the sheriff's office, FBI, U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, and state police.

Completes all records and reports of fire investigation activities.

Establishes and maintains good public relations.

Performs other class related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Unless otherwise specified, all requirements must be met before application closing date.

Must meet all requirements of the Municipal Fire and Police Civil Service Law, including being a citizen of the United States and of legal age.

After conditional offer of employment, but prior to beginning work in this class, must participate in and successfully complete and pass, at the designated time and place, a drug test and medical examinations which directly correlate to essential job duties of the position, with or without accommodation. Such tests and examinations shall be prepared and administered under the direction of the Appointing Authority and Jefferson Parish Government.

Must have a high school diploma or a valid certificate of equivalency issued by a state department of education.

Must not be less than eighteen (18) years of age.

Must have three (3) years experience in fire fighting or fire inspections including at least one (1) year in arson related investigations or in lieu thereof, two (2) years experience in arson investigations.

Must possess a valid driver's license.

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